

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCSE-00 L-03 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-07

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY

INFO AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ

AMCONSUL GUADALAJARA

AMCONSUL HERMOSILLO

AMCONSUL MATAMOROS

AMCONSUL MAZATLAN

AMCONSUL MERIDA

AMCONSUL MONTERREY

AMCONSUL NUEVO LAREDO

AMCONSUL TIJUANA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CPRS, MX

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON POST REPORT ON CONFISCATED PLANES.

1. WASHINGTON POST TODAY RAN FRONT PAGE STORY BY MARLISE SIMONS HEADLINED QUOTE U.S. ASKS MEXICO TO RETURN PLANES UNQUOTE DATED LINE MEXICO CITY, SEPTEMBER 21. STORY STATED QUOTE MEXICAN AUTHORITIES ARE HOLDING AND USING 188 AMERICAN OWNED PRIVATE AIRCRAFT, MOST OF WHICH WERE RENTED OR STOLEN FROM THEIR OWNERS BY DRUG-SMUGGLERS WHO WERE LATER APPREHENDED IN MEXICO UNQUOTE.

2. STORY NOTED EMBASSY ATTEMPT TO RECOVER PLANES UNDER UNCLASSIFIED

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CONVENTION HAD MET WITH LITTLE SUCCESS AND REPORTED AN

EMBASSY STATEMENT THAT MOST OF THE 188 LISTED AS PENDING RELEASE, INVESTIGATION, OR WITH LEGAL STATUS UNKNOWN HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED FOR USE OF GOM AGENCIES. REPORTED INSURANCE ADJUSTER STATING HIS CLIENTS QUOTE ARE DISCOURAGED WITH U.S. EMBASSY BECAUSE THEIR CASES JUST GET LOST IN RED TAPE THERE UNQUOTE AND THAT OWNERS NOW WORK THROUGH LOCAL ATTORNEYS QUOTE WHO KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH THE PAYOFFS. THERE IS NO FAST SOLUTION UNLESS SOMEONE GETS A GRATUITY AND THE PRICES RUN BETWEEN 20 AND 30 PERCENT OF THE VALUE OF THE AIRCRAFT UNQUOTE.

3. STORY REPORTED ANGRY US PLANE OWNERS INTEND LOBBY CONGRESS THROUGH AOPA. QUOTED PLANE OWNER AL COWAN AS STATING HE HAD PAID OVER DOLS 13,000 IN LEGAL FEES IN ATTEMPT TO RECOVER DC-3 AND, ALTHOUGH PILOTS AND CARGO RELEASED FOR LACK OF EVIDENCE, HAS NOT SUCCEEDED IN RECOVERING PLANE.

4. STORY QUOTED EMBASSY STATEMENT THAT UNDER AGREEMENT RELEASE TAKES QUOTE AN AVERAGE OF TWO OR THREE YEARS UNQUOTE. ARTICLE ALSO MENTIONED PRIVATE EXPLANATION BY MEXICAN OFFICIAL THAT FOREIGN MINISTER CAN ONLY FORWARD DOCUMENTATION AND THAT FAULT LAY WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS SUCH AS AG'S OFFICE AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

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